

WE CLAIM:

1. Crosslinkable polymer composition comprising an olefin copolymer or an olefin graft copolymer having hydrolysable silane groups, wherein at least 5mol% of said hydrolysable silane groups have been converted into un-hydrolysable groups.
2. Composition according to claim 1, wherein the proportion of hydrolysable silane groups converted into un-hydrolysable groups is no more than 50mol%, preferably no more than 25mol%, and more preferably between 7 and 15mol%.
3. Composition according to claim 1, wherein the hydrolysable silane groups have the formula  $-\text{Si}(\text{OA})_3$  where A is a hydrocarbyl group having 1-8 carbon atoms.
4. Composition according to claim 1, wherein the hydrolysable silane groups have been converted into un-hydrolysable groups by addition of a silanol or alcohol.
5. Composition or process according to claim 1, wherein the hydrolysable silane groups have been converted into un-hydrolysable groups by addition of a compound of the formula  $(\text{HO})_n-\text{Si}-\text{R}_{4-n}$  wherein R is a hydrocarbyl group of at least 4 carbon atoms, or a hydroxy or  $\text{C}_1-\text{C}_6$  alkoxy group, and n is an integer from 1 to 3.
6. Composition or process according to claim 1, wherein the hydrolysable silane groups have been converted into un-hydrolysable groups by the addition of diphenyl silanediol and/or triphenyl silanol.
7. Process for making a crosslinkable polymer composition, comprising the steps of forming an olefin copolymer or graft copolymer having hydrolysable silane groups, and incorporating therewith a crosslinking retarder capable of reacting with said

hydrolysable silane groups to form un-hydrolysable groups, in an amount sufficient to react with at least 5 mol% of the hydrolysable silane groups.

8. Process according to claim 7, wherein the amount of crosslinking retarder added is sufficient to react with no more than 50mol%, preferably no more than 25mol%, and more preferably between 7 and 15mol% of the hydrolysable silane groups.

9. Process according to claim 7, wherein the hydrolysable silane groups have the formula  $-\text{Si}(\text{OA})_3$  where A is a hydrocarbyl group having 1-8 carbon atoms.

10. Process according to claim 7, wherein the crosslinking retarder comprises a silanol or alcohol.

11. Process according to claim 7, wherein the crosslinking retarder comprises a compound of the formula  $(\text{HO})_n-\text{Si}-\text{R}_{4-n}$  wherein R is a hydrocarbyl group of at least 4 carbon atoms, or a hydroxy or  $\text{C}_1-\text{C}_6$  alkoxy group, and n is an integer from 1 to 3.

12. Process according to claim 7, wherein the crosslinking retarder comprises diphenyl silanediol or triphenyl silanol.

13. Use of a silanol or alcohol to reduce the rate of premature crosslinking under ambient conditions of an olefin copolymer or graft copolymer having hydrolysable silane groups.